U.S. Department of Education
2011 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program
A Public School

School Type (Public Schools): (Check all that apply, if any) ☐ Charter ☐ Title 1 ☐ Magnet ☐ Choice

Name of Principal: Mrs. Autumn Eirich

Official School Name: Bel Air Elementary

School Mailing Address: 14401 Barton Boulevard
Cumberland, MD 21502-5899

County: Allegany State School Code Number: 0702

Telephone: (301) 729-2992 E-mail: autumn.eirich@acps.k12.md.us

Fax: (301) 729-5024 Web URL: http://acps.allconet.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. David Cox. Superintendent e-mail: david.cox@acps.k12.md.us

District Name: Allegany District Phone: (301) 759-2037

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mr. Michael Llewellyn

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I - Eligibility Certification), and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173.

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

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The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)

2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2010-2011 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.

5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2005.

6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 or 2010.

7. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

8. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

9. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

10. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district: 14 Elementary schools
   (per district designation) 4 Middle/Junior high schools
   4 High schools
   0 K-12 schools
   22 Total schools in district
2. District per-pupil expenditure: 13251

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located: Small city or town in a rural area

4. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 4

5. Number of students as of October 1, 2010 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total			# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	16	11	27		6	0	0	0
K	15	9	24		7	0	0	0
1	11	13	24		8	0	0	0
2	25	22	47		9	0	0	0
3	13	17	30		10	0	0	0
4	20	17	37		11	0	0	0
5	21	17	38		12	0	0	0
					Total in Applying School:			227

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:

0 %	American Indian or Alaska Native
1 %	Asian
2 %	Black or African American
0 %	Hispanic or Latino
0 %	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
89 %	White
8 %	Two or more races
100 %	Total

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2009-2010 school year: 12%

This rate is calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

(1)	Number of students who transferred ***to*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	12
(2)	Number of students who transferred ***from*** the school after October 1, 2009 until the end of the school year.	14
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	26
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2009	223
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.12
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	12

8. Percent limited English proficient students in the school: 0%

Total number of limited English proficient students in the school: 0

Number of languages represented, not including English: 0

Specify languages:

9. Percent of students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 45%

   Total number of students who qualify: 103

   If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

10. Percent of students receiving special education services: 15%

    Total number of students served: 33

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

3	Autism	0	Orthopedic Impairment
0	Deafness	1	Other Health Impaired
0	Deaf-Blindness	7	Specific Learning Disability
0	Emotional Disturbance	21	Speech or Language Impairment
0	Hearing Impairment	0	Traumatic Brain Injury
0	Mental Retardation	0	Visual Impairment Including Blindness
0	Multiple Disabilities	1	Developmentally Delayed

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff	
	Full-Time	**Part-Time**
Administrator(s)	1	0
Classroom teachers	11	0
Special resource teachers/specialists	3	10
Paraprofessionals	2	2
Support staff	9	0
Total number	26	12

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1: 20:1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only high schools need to supply graduation rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any student or teacher attendance rates under 95% and teacher turnover rates over 12% and fluctuations in graduation rates.

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Daily student attendance	95%	96%	95%	96%	96%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	95%	96%	96%	95%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	7%	5%	2%	5%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

If these data are not available, explain and provide reasonable estimates.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools): Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2010 are doing as of Fall 2010.

Graduating class size:	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in vocational training	0%
Found employment	0%
Military service	0%
Other	0%
Total	**0**%

PART III - SUMMARY

11MD1

Bel Air Elementary is located in Allegany County, Maryland, in the rural western mountains of the state. The school educates students from Pre-K to Grade 5 and also houses a county Head Start program. The student population was 223 for the 2009-2010 school year. An open-space building, Bel Air is situated within a housing development outside the city of Cumberland. The community this school services has been changing for the last several years. Formerly a small, affluent area, the percentage of Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) students in the school has increased from 33 percent in 2007 to 45 percent for the 2010-2011 school year. Despite this change, Bel Air is proud to have maintained its standard of excellence through the years.

There is little teacher turnover at Bel Air, and continuity of the staffing helps maintain strong teamwork and positive relationships. The students are familiar with the entire staff, including the itinerant educators, the cafeteria workers, the custodians, and the bus drivers. Drivers often check on students who did not board the bus for home. The secretary and the nurse are vital to the school's success and both work closely with all parents, students, and staff. Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) parents are visible in the school daily. Bel Air is truly a family and this attitude reflects in our students' success.

Since Mrs. Eirich became principal four years ago, the school has established a vision of excellence for all. The school's vision is "Bel Air Eagles Soar to Score: A School Centered on Reaching Excellence". To perpetuate this vision, the meaning of excellence is taught by teacher-led discussions using examples from reading, math, science, and social studies texts. Students write about different examples of excellence they have seen or performed in school, and those writings are shared during morning announcements. The success of the vision was evident when a special needs student wrote, "I can read!"

Beyond the classroom, the students are encouraged to demonstrate excellence in their personal lives by participating in the Mileage Club. Intermediate students walk or run laps around the school's Nature Trail during recess to improve their physical conditioning.

To further encourage excellence at Bel Air Elementary, the staff maintains a strong bond with our community partners. Many businesses and organizations in the area serve as partners with Bel Air, and their members and employees offer a variety of services to the school. For example, our partners read to the students during Read Across America week and share their knowledge on Career Day.

The Bel Air School community is proud of its efforts to demonstrate caring and service to others. In the past two years alone, Bel Air has participated in the Derrick Mason Diabetes Awareness Drive and a Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. We have also organized and completed "Paces for Patrick". Patrick Barry, son of a retired teacher from Bel Air, needed a liver transplant, and the school banded together to raise funds.
This year the school community completed "Laps for Lupus" to support our physical education teacher who was recently diagnosed with Lupus. The school annually donates mittens and hats and "gently used toys" to children living in shelters.

The staff responds regularly to people in need. Staff members have provided Christmas, including gifts and food, for a family of five when the father became ill. We have also donated substantially to the family of one of our students who is battling Neuroblastoma.

One of our most successful traditions through the years has been the St. Jude's Math-a-Thon. More than 70 percent of our students annually participate in the Math-a-Thon, and their efforts were recognized by the National Network of Partnership Schools for "Outstanding Practices" in 2008-2009.

Another tradition is the strong PTO involvement at Bel Air. Our parents and grandparents serve as a vital resource donating more than 1,300 hours in 2009-2010. The PTO has painted the cafeteria with a nutrition theme, the music and art room with a fine arts theme, and the halls with a bright, welcoming atmosphere. The PTO makes the costumes and sets for the musical productions, sponsors the talent show, creates the yearbook, and hosts the annual Back-to-School Bash at the Bel Air Pool. PTO members complete bulletin boards in the hallways, assist with our Soar to S.C.O.R.E. activities, and provide the funds for the classes to participate in Red Ribbon Week events and field trips. The PTO also pays for the annual Maryland Agricultural Education Mobile Science Lab visit.

Bel Air School has maintained the standard of excellence through the years. In 2007-2008 and 2010-2011, Bel Air was named a School of Distinction by the Allegany County Board of Education. Our greatest reward is the success of our students as they move forward to become accomplished adults.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Maryland School Assessment (MSA) was introduced to Maryland schools in 2003 for Grades 3 and 5 and in 2004 for Grade 4. Since the inception of the MSA, Bel Air has achieved and maintained standards of excellence in both mathematics and reading. The MSA meets the requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act and provides educators, parents, and the public with valuable information about student, school, county, and state education performance. Students who score Advanced or Proficient on the reading MSA are able to demonstrate the ability to construct meaning on or above grade level. Students who are Advanced or Proficient in mathematics are able to successfully apply math concepts to real-world situations.

Bel Air is particularly proud of the fact that 100 percent of grade 4 students have been Proficient or Advanced in mathematics for the past four years, and 100 percent of its Grade 3 students have achieved Proficient or Advanced scores in mathematics for the past three years. In addition, special education students have achieved 100 percent Proficient or Advanced in Grade 4 mathematics every year since 2005.

In 2010 Bel Air had a 15.7 percent special education population and a 41.3 percent Free and Reduced Meals (FARMS) population. Bel Air scored higher than any school in Maryland with similar statistics in both reading and mathematics. Also, Bel Air ranked at the top in the state of Maryland as most successful with special education students in MSA reading with all 24 of the special needs students scoring Proficient or Advanced.

In examining trends, Bel Air has exceeded Annual Measurable Objective (AMO) in all grades in reading and mathematics since the initiation of MSA. As the FARMS population of the school has increased, test scores have remained consistently high. Last year, Bel Air was ranked as the Allegany County elementary school most successful with FARMS students in mathematics.

Since 2006, more than 90 percent of all students at Bel Air have scored Proficient or Advanced in all grades in mathematics and reading. Because of the small population at Bel Air, one student constitutes a deceptively large percentage of the population. One student represents 11 percent of the Special Education population for Grade 5 in the 2010 MSA results. Despite this statistic, the special education population had a higher percentage of students scoring Advanced in Grade 3 and Grade 4 MSA math in 2010 than did the regular education population.

One of the goals of the School Improvement Plan for the past several years has been to increase the number of students scoring Advanced on MSA. The success of this effort is most obvious in the transition from Grade 3 to Grade 4. Of the students who took Grade 3 MSA in 2009, 36.8 percent scored Advanced in reading and 54 percent achieved Advanced in mathematics. In 2010, 59 percent of those same students were Advanced in reading and 80 percent scored Advanced in mathematics.

Each year Bel Air staff reviews the MSA results and benchmark results from the previous year and selects specific students who have reading and math test results that are not consistent with the students' abilities. These students are identified as "target group students" and are given additional academic support throughout the year. More than half of the students identified in reading increased their test results from Proficient to Advanced. Grade 4 also had more than half of the identified students improve from Proficient to Advanced in math.

Bel Air has successfully completed the Maryland State Department of Education's Early Childhood Validation in Pre-K and Kindergarten twice in the past six years. Validation is a process by which high quality early learning programs are identified by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Classroom environments are evaluated by trained MSDE staff for curriculum, developmental appropriate practices, organization, alignment to the Maryland Model for School Readiness, parent communication, and the early childhood connection to the larger school purpose.

Additional Information regarding the Maryland School Assessment can be found at www.mdk12.org and at www.mdreportcard.org.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Each year, when the school receives its Maryland School Assessment (MSA) results, the School Improvement Team (SIT) meets to review both the MSA results and benchmark scores for the year. Using this information and input from the teachers, the team develops "target groups", which are select groups of students who are not achieving as well as they should. This selection process includes students who scored just above the Proficient standard and those who scored close to the Advanced standard. Students who scored at the low end of any Advanced area are also considered. These students receive additional support through the year to help them acquire the skills necessary to be more successful on the assessments.

The SIT reviews all components of the MSA to determine particular skills on which the students did not score as well as expected. The staff uses that information to improve instruction by addressing the areas of need across all grade levels. County math and reading specialists are asked to provide additional instruction in the skills the students find more challenging. These specialists work with individuals and small groups and also present classroom lessons.

The principal maintains data for the "target group" students containing all assessment and benchmark information. These forms, used during team meetings, focus instructional conversation on the successes and needs of each student.

As each benchmark assessment is given during the year, the teachers meet with the principal and other appropriate staff to review the results. When necessary, students who show need in a particular academic skill are given additional instruction by the classroom teacher, the principal, the school counselor, or any other staff member who is skilled in that particular area.

After-school tutoring sessions are provided by the teachers in Grades 3, 4, and 5 during the month of February. Students who participate in these sessions are grouped by their specific educational talents and needs so they can advance their skills and build confidence in their abilities. For the past five years, more than 90 percent of all students invited to participate have attended these tutoring sessions.
The School Improvement Team also reviews the MSA results to discover areas of weakness that may have appeared in the school-wide results. If the student population struggled with a particular skill or concept, the staff seeks new approaches to teaching that particular concept so students gain mastery of the skill.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Each year during American Education Week, Bel Air Elementary holds a Parent Breakfast which has an average attendance of more than 100 parents. During the breakfast there is a PowerPoint presentation on display that contains the Maryland School Assessment (MSA) results from the previous year. Also included in the presentation are the school's goals for the current academic year and the ways in which the parents can support the school's efforts. In addition, a hand-out of the school's MSA results is provided to each parent. This flyer also contains information concerning the School Improvement Plan. The principal and members of the School Improvement Team are always available to explain the data to parents and to direct them to resources online that can help them better understand the MSA. Teachers spend time during Parent Conference Days reviewing individual student results with parents in an effort to increase the parents' understanding of the assessment program. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) is available in the school's front lobby for perusal, and the school has community partners serving as members of the School Improvement Team. This helps shareholders gain a better understanding of the educational program in Maryland.

Bel Air maintains a website, thanks to the efforts of a PTO parent, and the assessment result highlights are posted there. The school improvement plan is also available on the Allegany County Public School's website.

During the school year, special parent sessions are led by the Grade 1 teacher and the math specialist. During these sessions parents learn about the staff's expectations for the students and how the parents can help students achieve their academic goals, particularly in math and reading. At the beginning of each

school year the parents receive a reading brochure which provides an overview of the entire reading program for the school, and supplemental programs used by the reading intervention teacher. This brochure, created by the school counselor and the reading intervention teacher, also contains detailed information on the themes being taught in each grade. The reading intervention teacher also distributes a monthly newsletter to the parents of her students, providing detailed information about her programs and how they help the students achieve academic success.

The most effective way the school communicates results is through its open-door policy. Parents and shareholders are welcome to visit at their convenience and discuss Bel Air's standards of excellence.

4. Sharing Lessons Learned:

Bel Air School's teachers are actively involved in a variety of activities so that they stay current on all educational strategies and methods being used in Allegany County and the State of Maryland. The teachers present trainings and attend educational sessions as a standard part of their approach to teaching.

The Grade 4 teachers have shared successful reading strategies by providing techniques and materials to other school staff members in Allegany County. They have also presented similar lessons on math vocabulary by the request of a school principal.

Bel Air is a Professional Development School partnering with Frostburg State University (FSU). One Grade 5 teacher is the school coordinator, and she works with FSU student interns to assure a successful internship for all involved. Another Grade 5 teacher was a member of the committee that examined and selected the reading series being implemented county-wide this year. A Grade 3 teacher served as a representative of the Allegany County Public Schools to assist FSU professors with program alignment between student-teacher lesson planning and the Maryland State Curricula expectations. Several Bel Air teachers have served as mentor teachers for newly-hired teachers across Allegany County.

The principal has presented Team to Teach techniques and successes to the Elementary Principal's Council. She also serves on the county and state Master Plan committees, which allows her access to the many creative education approaches being implemented successfully in other counties across Maryland.

In an effort to increase their own knowledge, Bel Air educators attend a variety of trainings. Several teachers have received instruction in the implementation of the Instructional Consultation Team (ICT) approach to assisting students with academic challenges. The reading intervention teacher has been educated in the implementation of Fundations, Early Reading Intervention, Wilson, and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Two intermediate teachers have attended Physics Unraveled to increase their knowledge, and others have attended trainings in differentiated instruction, technology education, health education, and peer mediation.

Mrs. Eirich has attended the National Convention of Mathematics Teachers, and the school counselor has attended the American School Counselors' National Convention.

Bel Air School's staff brings information back to share with each other during faculty meetings, professional development days, and team meetings. Great practices are embedded into the teaching techniques used in the classrooms, and school-wide efforts to implement these practices lead to the academic success of the students.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The curricular framework for all areas of instruction is Maryland's State Curriculum. Pacing guides, developed by the Allegany County Public Schools, ensure that students receive instruction in all standards of the Maryland Curriculum.

The Maryland Curriculum for Reading/English Language Arts identifies three reading standards: General Reading Processes, Informational Text, and Literary Text. The General Reading Processes standard develops the foundational reading skills related to the five components of reading as outlined by the National Reading Panel. The remaining two standards provide strategies necessary to develop more complex skills related to reading, comprehending, and interpreting non-fictional and fictional text. All students are instructed with appropriate grade-level materials. Flex groups provide the opportunity for teachers to address identified student needs. These flex groups are based on reading instructional level, skills level, and/or interest level. Additional interventions are provided by the reading intervention teacher to students who need specific support. Advanced level materials are available for use with students working beyond grade level. Student progress is monitored by both formal and informal assessments. Additional Maryland Curriculum Reading/English Language Arts standards are related to writing, conventions of standard English, listening, and speaking. The regular school day includes a 120-minute block for Reading/English Language Arts, with an additional 30 minutes designated for enrichment. Students write across the curriculum and are encouraged to write in relation to the school's vision and to real-life experiences. Speaking and listening skills are modeled and practiced throughout the day, and opportunities are provided for students to participate in public speaking whenever possible.

The Maryland Curriculum for mathematics identifies the grade-level expectations by seven standards, including algebra, geometry, measurement, statistics, probability, number computation, and processes. Math is taught daily for a 90-minute block. Additional time is available for enrichment or remediation of targeted skills. Manipulatives are used to encourage hands-on, kinesthetic education prior to moving to the representational and abstract levels. Flex groups provide the opportunity for differentiated instruction which allows for students to accelerate to the best of their ability. Peer-to-peer instruction helps students review math skills while encouraging their classmates' success. Students use their writing skills to respond to brief constructed response questions in math. Again, student progress is monitored with formal and informal assessments.

The science curriculum is based upon the Maryland Curriculum standards of earth and space science, life science, chemistry, physics and environmental science. The skills and process standard is integrated into the other standards. The science curriculum spirals among all grade levels. Students receive instruction in small and large groups, through hands-on activities and lab experiments, and through technology-based lessons. The instruction is geared to help students gain a firm grasp on the practice of the scientific method. Health is also embedded in the science curriculum.
The Maryland Curriculum for social studies contains educational standards for political science, people of the nation and world, geography, economics, and history. A sixth standard, social studies skills and processes, is integrated within the others as students read, write, and develop thinking skills related to social studies. Instruction includes small- and large-group teacher presentations, cooperative learning activities, and visual, auditory, and hands-on materials.

The goal of the fine arts curriculum is to provide opportunities for all elementary students to participate in music and art and to develop and refine their skills as they mature. Students in Grades K-5 receive a sequential program of instruction in music which includes basic concepts, listening and performance skills, and appreciation. Students who wish to learn to play an instrument may choose beginning band in Grade 4. The art curriculum in Grades K-5 includes the content and methods of inquiry for the four

interrelated visual art disciplines including art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics. The program at each grade level is sequential and comprehensive in the experiences and opportunities offered to the students.

The Maryland Curriculum standards for media are to define and refine a problem or question, locate and evaluate resources and sources, find, generate, read, and organize data information, interpret recorded data/information, share findings and conclusions, and appreciate literature and life-long learning. The instructional design fosters competence and stimulates interest in reading, viewing, and using information and ideas. By guiding students toward self-discovery and self-direction, the library media program assists in promoting the learning of skills and attitudes essential to academic, vocational, and personal development.

Physical education provides students with opportunities to learn motor skills, develop fitness, and gain understanding about the importance of physical activity and healthy bodies. The six standards of the Maryland State Physical Education Curriculum are skillfulness, biomechanical principles, motor learning principles, exercise physiology, physical activity and social psychological principles. Students are provided an individualized, developmentally appropriate, and personally challenging instructional program that will advance the knowledge, confidence, skills, and motivation needed to engage in a lifelong, healthy, active lifestyle.

2. Reading/English:

The reading curriculum at Bel Air Elementary is a balanced approach, designed to meet the needs of all individuals. The rigorous reading program is aligned to the Maryland State Curriculum which provides an approach to literacy encompassing the five areas of reading including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The staff previously used the Houghton Mifflin program and is currently using the MacMillan/McGraw-Hill reading program as the primary resource, following the stories and skills sequences as basic guides. The reading block is 120 minutes daily, with enrichment time of 30 minutes for interventions.
Beyond the core text, the staff teaches Elements of Reading and Read Naturally. These are scientifically research-based curricula for which all staff members received in-service training. In addition, the teachers incorporate leveled readers, literature books, novels, and short stories to further develop student skills, vocabulary, and comprehension. Educators expose the students to a variety of fiction and non-fiction works, and independent student reading time is scheduled into the school day to enhance awareness and skills.

Students are placed in intervention and flex groups based upon individual needs and interests. The reading intervention teacher works with more than 40 percent of all students in Grades K-3 to provide additional training in specific areas of need. County endorsed programs such as Fundations, Early Reading Intervention, and Wilson, are integrated into the school's reading instruction so that there is a seamless transition from intervention to small- and large-group instruction. Standard progress monitoring of students receiving intervention helps the teachers address these individuals' specific needs. Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) is used to assess students three times per year and teachers use this information to adjust their teaching effectively. After-school reading lessons are offered in February and March to selected students who need academic support. The teachers focus lessons on comprehension and writing in response to reading and also include test-taking skills and strategies.
Bel Air School maintains a common academic language. Teachers of all disciplines are aware of the common academic language of Bel Air School and use this information consistently. All teachers in the school read with the students on a regular basis, helping students recognize the importance of reading in all aspects of their lives.

3. Mathematics:

The math curriculum for Bel Air is based on the Maryland State Curriculum and is approached sequentially using a pacing guide developed by the Allegany County Public Schools. This ensures that all standards are taught in a timely manner.

The staff uses Harcourt Math as its primary resource and supplements with a variety of activities, lessons, technology, and manipulatives. The math concepts are to ensure that students approach new concepts with support of prior learning as they spiral through the math scope and sequence.

Students are grouped and regrouped based on teacher observation and periodic formal and informal assessment. All groups cover current grade level content but are accelerated into the next skill level when appropriate. Students participate in math warm-up activities which contain spiraling content mixed with advanced material.

After-school math lessons are offered in February and March to selected students in Grades 3-5. Participants are chosen based upon their academic needs, and in the past several years, more than 95 percent of all students invited have attended. Lessons emphasize math vocabulary through levels of thinking that follow the Bloom's Taxonomy model. This supplements the Mentoring Minds Vocabulary Adventure program which includes vocabulary cards containing words and their definitions as well as examples to help students apply the knowledge.

The ixl.com website, used in Grades 1 and 5, is aligned with all Maryland math standards and is accessible at home and at school for students and parents. Another supplemental program is LLTeach. This series transitions students through Maryland standards using concrete models to iconic models and then to the number representation. It provides students, Grades 3-5, with an opportunity to dictate the speed at which they transition through each stage. Additional technology-based programs used at Bel Air include websites such as resources.oswego.org and CoolMath.com. Students in Grades 2-5 participate in the Math Facts computer program, and 99 percent of Bel Air's students were rewarded last year for earning Fact Master status.

Bel Air takes advantage of the expertise of county math specialists. These individuals regularly present new techniques and approaches to the teachers and to the students. The specialists work closely with identified students to help these children master challenging skills. The specialists meet monthly with teachers to review student-tracking documentation in order to best address the needs of each individual.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Science education includes distinct fields of study, and the Maryland State Curriculum for science defines those fields of study in content standards for earth/space science, life science, chemistry, physics, and environmental science. A sixth standard for skills and process is integrated into the other five. Maryland's science curriculum concepts spiral through grade levels; therefore, students use previous knowledge to gain deeper understanding of the material.

Beginning in Kindergarten, the science curriculum emphasizes a hands-on approach. Kindergarten centers are theme-based activities, and the science standard being addressed in the class is included in the center lessons.

In Grades 1-5 the curriculum is presented with an emphasis placed on technological and hands-on instruction. The McGraw-Hill science series is the core text. A variety of supplemental materials are utilized. Each classroom is equipped with a kit of experiments, developed by Allegany County teachers, that matches the Maryland State Curriculum standards. The Safari Montage video program provides video clips that supplement the concept being taught. The staff takes advantage of the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Coalition grant, inviting speakers from the community

to present science education. Frostburg State University professors also provide lessons in their content area of expertise. Grade 5 students attend a five-day outdoor residential camp experience at the Garret County 4-H Camp annually.

The School Improvement Team (SIT) believes that the science curriculum is an area in which Bel Air's students need additional academic support. The School Improvement Plan (SIP) contains professional development and student achievement goals that plan efforts to encourage excellence in science instruction. Included in this effort is an after-school science program for Grade 5. Students who are achieving below grade level in science are invited to participate and are instructed in identified areas of need.

Through professional development teachers are acquiring additional knowledge about expository writing with an emphasis on the science curriculum. This knowledge is being incorporated into lessons that are designed to improve comprehension. The staff is providing opportunities for students to respond to informational text through the use of technology so students experience a computer-friendly testing environment. The school uses the Electronic Practice Assessment Test to help students become familiar with technology-based testing. As a result of this focus, students have more opportunities to read and write more expository text individually and in whole-group and flex-group settings. This provides the opportunity for students to take ownership of their learning.

5. Instructional Methods:

Bel Air School's staff is highly motivated to encourage students to achieve to their maximum potential. To reach that goal, the teachers use a variety of instructional methods to best meet the needs of each learner. Each teacher uses large-and small-group instruction, flex-grouping, and peer tutoring. Intervention groups are available to assist students with specific learning needs. The special education teacher provides a variety of instructional techniques for special and general education students, including use of highlighting, modified testing, and color coding of phonetic patterns to reduce distractions and encourage students' strengths. The special education teacher meets weekly with all regular education teachers to maximize the delivery of services. This allows the special education teacher to share strategies that have been successful with students who have specific needs and which help all students learn.

All classrooms have reading Focus Walls, designed to highlight the skills being taught each week. Math logic and math vocabulary posters are on display, and math home-connection activities are shared with parents. Pre-K and Kindergarten centers are theme-related so students experience hands-on activities to supplement their learning.
The Early Identification and Intervention Program (EIIP) allows for staff to support students who demonstrate academic challenges. The Instructional Consultation Team (ICT) provides teacher-to-teacher support to help identified students achieve success through strategic approaches to teaching.

All students in Grades 3-5 who are identified as needing additional support are invited to participate in after-school tutoring. A particular emphasis is on meeting the needs of struggling students who are included in identified subgroups.

Those students who are identified as academically gifted and talented are invited to join the Accelerated and Enrichment Program (AEP). Gifted students are also encouraged to enter writing contests and scholarship contests. Bel Air students have been recognized for their scholarship. For example, one student was recently published in a poetry contest and another was selected as a Carson Scholar.

Students with specific learning styles are frequently grouped for instruction; the principal and the school counselor provide instruction to groups of students who respond well to particular instructional styles. Matching students with testing accommodators they trust is another important approach. When the students are comfortable with their adult accommodators, the students exude more confidence and thus make better academic progress.

Enrichment time within the classroom schedule helps give students the opportunity to review material. Teachers also make themselves available during lunch and planning to tutor students.

6. Professional Development:

Bel Air Elementary is piloting the Team to Teach program which is in its second year of implementation. Team to Teach focuses on establishing and implementing professional learning teams. This allows teachers to share their expertise across classrooms and grade levels. It encourages teachers to collaborate through observation and discussion, and helps individuals implement new ideas with enthusiasm and confidence. These professional development activities focus on vertical conferencing so all grades are highly involved in the success of the students as they progress through each grade. In addition, common, grade-level planning time affords daily opportunity for staff development and focused instructional conversation.

Articulation meetings are vital to Bel Air's success. Using materials developed by the principal, teachers meet in vertical teams to share information about their students so the teachers are aware of students' needs and strengths from the first day they enter their classrooms.

The Bel Air teachers strive to improve their teaching methods. They are willing to take risks, try new strategies, and plan challenging lessons. For the last five years, the Bel Air staff has been receiving in-service training from its reading specialist. The staff development has centered on expository reading and writing, with an emphasis on writing to inform.

As a Professional Development School (PDS) with Frostburg State University, Bel Air works with student interns from their first experience through their student teaching. Bel Air staff members also serve as mentors for the Allegany County teacher induction program. One staff member also served on a committee to align the FSU education curriculum to best suit the instructional expectations for students in Maryland.

The school counselor shares character and career education lessons on the Allegany County Public Schools website. The Grade 3 and Grade 4 teachers provided an in-service to another school staff about math vocabulary. They have also met with the Allegany County Parent Advisory Council to share information about the reading program and reading support parents can provide.

Teachers have served on curriculum committees, the report card committee, textbook selection committees, and pacing guide committees. The staff remains actively involved in self-improvement and in sharing their knowledge with others.

As curriculum, instruction, and assessment expectations evolve, teachers at Bel Air strive to stay current in their educational practices. The goal of reaching excellence is one towards which the staff works diligently by participating in all aspects of professional development.

7. School Leadership:

All successful schools achieve and maintain their excellence through strong leadership. Bel Air has a history of outstanding leaders and the current principal, Mrs. Autumn Eirich, brings a spark of excitement to the school with her positive attitude and her dedication to the school community.

Bel Air Elementary is a "School Centered on Reaching Excellence" (S.C.O.R.E.). Mrs. Eirich facilitated the development of this vision her first year as principal, and she invited all shareholders to participate in the creation of the philosophy. Vision goals are achieved each year through a variety of focused efforts. Students write about excellence, teachers read about the theme, and parents create visual displays to help support our vision.

The principal serves as a role model for excellence, and she encourages all to demonstrate excellence in everything they do. She rewards excellence and recognizes others' achievements regularly. The morale of the students and staff is positive because of the philosophy of the school and the efforts of the administration.

As the instructional leader, Mrs. Eirich holds weekly faculty meetings, team meetings, and Pupil Services Team meetings. She seeks input from teachers and staff as to what is needed to help our students, and she provides the time and materials to meet identified needs. She is inclusive in her approach to improving the teaching and learning environment by involving the county reading and math specialists, school-based personnel, parents, and others as needed. Besides her work at Bel Air, Mrs. Eirich serves on both the county and state Master Plan Committees. Mrs. Eirich is held in high esteem by her principal colleagues for her efforts.

The principal and school counselor serve on all school committees and work with small groups of students with specific needs. The staff assumes the mantle of leadership as well, volunteering to chair committees, working as co-chairpersons of the School Improvement Team, and taking on leadership of events and activities. Our school parents also assume leadership roles in the county. One father is currently the president of the Allegany County Parent Advisory Council.

Mrs. Eirich recognizes the importance of teamwork to bring out excellence in each individual, and she encourages others to provide support as well. Our community believes in mutual respect, teamwork, and trust. Parents, community partners, and central office personnel are all welcome in the school to assist in any way best suited to their talents and interests.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 3 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Maryland State Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	100	100	100	97	94
Advanced	62	54	60	69	60
Number of students tested	39	31	39	35	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	100			92	
Advanced	52			62	
Number of students tested	21			12	
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced			100		
Advanced			60		
Number of students tested			10		
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	100	100	100	97	94
Advanced	63	53	58	69	58
Number of students tested	35	29	37	34	32
NOTES:					

11MD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 3 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Maryland State Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	100	97	100	100	97
Advanced	41	51	35	42	38
Number of students tested	39	31	39	35	36
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	100			100	
Advanced	33			23	
Number of students tested	21			12	
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced			100		
Advanced			50		
Number of students tested			10		
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	100	97	100	100	97
Advanced	43	47	34	43	39
Number of students tested	35	29	37	34	32
NOTES:					

11MD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 4 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Maryland State Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	100	100	100	100	92
Advanced	81	71	65	67	48
Number of students tested	35	35	36	38	37
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	100		100	100	
Advanced	67		33	64	
Number of students tested	11		11	10	
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	100	100	100	100	92
Advanced	82	74	68	64	48
Number of students tested	33	33	33	32	37
NOTES:					

11MD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 4 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Maryland State Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	97	100	97	97	92
Advanced	58	37	51	39	38
Number of students tested	35	35	36	38	37
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	91		100	90	
Advanced	25		42	27	
Number of students tested	11		11	10	
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	97	100	100	97	92
Advanced	59	37	53	42	38
Number of students tested	33	33	33	32	37
NOTES:					

11MD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 5 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Maryland State Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	92	97	100	94	94
Advanced	39	26	42	32	34
Number of students tested	38	38	41	36	35
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	73	92	100		92
Advanced	8	7	30		0
Number of students tested	11	14	10		12
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	92	97	100	94	94
Advanced	40	29	43	33	34
Number of students tested	37	35	35	35	35
NOTES:					

11MD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: 5 Test: Maryland School Assessment

Edition/Publication Year: 2010 Publisher: Maryland State Department of Education

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	95	97	98	89	83
Advanced	59	61	61	50	54
Number of students tested	38	38	41	36	35
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	91	100	90		50
Advanced	33	50	40		17
Number of students tested	11	14	10		12
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	95	100	97	89	83
Advanced	58	63	63	47	54
Number of students tested	37	35	35	35	35
NOTES:					

11MD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: School Average

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	97	99	100	97	94
Advanced	60	50	55	56	47
Number of students tested	112	104	116	109	108
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	93	97	100	94	87
Advanced	44	26	36	49	31
Number of students tested	43	31	30	31	30
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	96	100	100	92	88
Advanced	46	50	52	38	23
Number of students tested	23	19	25	24	16
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	97	99	100	97	93
Advanced	61	52	56	55	46
Number of students tested	105	97	105	101	104
NOTES:					

11MD1

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading Grade: School Average

	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006
Testing Month	Mar	Mar	Apr	Mar	Mar
SCHOOL SCORES					
Proficient plus Advanced	97	98	98	95	91
Advanced	53	50	49	43	43
Number of students tested	112	104	116	109	108
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free/Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-economic Disadvantaged Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	95	97	97	90	67
Advanced	31	40	30	34	16
Number of students tested	43	31	30	31	30
2. African American Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
4. Special Education Students					
Proficient plus Advanced	100	100	100	92	88
Advanced	38	50	48	12	1
Number of students tested	23	19	25	24	16
5. English Language Learner Students					
Proficient plus Advanced					
Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. White					
Proficient plus Advanced	97	99	99	95	90
Advanced	53	49	50	44	44
Number of students tested	105	97	105	101	104
NOTES:					

11MD1